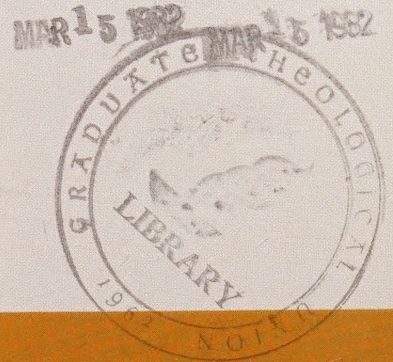


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2 1982
VOLUME 21
FEBRUARY



TWENTY YEARS OF GROWTH

page 2

CHIARA IN LONDON

page 12

THE NEW HUMANITY MOVEMENT

page 16

MONTHLY WORD OF LIFE

page 25

**NEW COLUMN!!
LC TIE LINE**

page 14



2 **TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY:** Members and friends of the Focolare Movement gathered to celebrate the Movement's twenty years in North America.



4 **A NEW BEGINNING:** Two in- weekends held in New York and Ch — offered a glimpse of the Movement's first years here, and the occasion to thank God for the many blessings received.

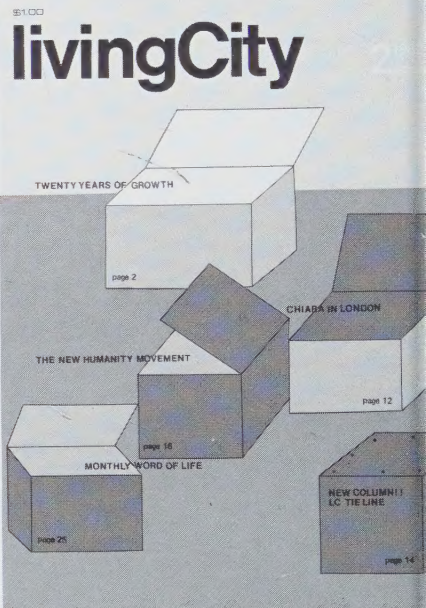
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A CONVERSATION FROM LONDON: Chiara Lubich, foundress of the Focolare Movement, answers questions presented to her by members of the Movement during her visit to London last June.



14 LC TIE LINE: We introduce with this issue a new column, a kind of "Tie Line" in print form, which will transmit the latest developments of the Focolare Movement at large.



16 RELATIONSHIPS: The New Humanity Movement, aimed at renewing society from within, is presented through a series of articles, an interview with one of the leaders of the Movement, and several experiences drawn from daily work environments.

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CONTENTS

Feature Article:	2
TWENTY GRACE-FILLED YEARS AND A NEW BEGINNING	
GEN VERDE: FIRST U.S. TOUR	10
A CONVERSATION FROM LONDON	12
LC TIE LINE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD	14
RELATIONSHIPS	16
Rediscovering the Person in Every Neighbor	17
What the New Humanity Wants	19
When Relationships Change	21
Jesus in Our Midst	22

OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Monthly Word of Life	25
Experiences	26

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TWENTY GRACE-FILLED YEARS AND A NEW BEGINNING

*An Anniversary
spanning the continent was celebrated
over two intense weekends — one in New York and one in Chicago—
and highlighted the many graces
received during these past twenty years.
Chiara Lubich, unable to be present,
in her message, which was read in New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral,
indicated how this day
could also be a new beginning:*

“On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the beginning of the Focolare Movement in North America, I want to assure you of my deepest unity, my spiritual presence among you all, and my remembrance at Holy Mass. May Our Lady bless in a special way this portion of the Work of Mary¹, with all the focolarini, volunteers, gen, priests, men and women religious, and the members of its various Movements. Let us sing the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving to God for all that Mary has done in our souls, and let us consider this day a starting point as we set out towards the goal of reaching sanctity together. This for the greater glory of God and of the Church. May the Blessed Mother, through this Movement, give His Eminence the Cardinal, and our bishops here, a little of that joy which she radiated on the Apostles during her earthly life. May Jesus in the midst of you all be your celebration.”

Chiara

1) Work of Mary is the official name of the Focolare Movement.

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

NEW YORK

November 21

- 3:00 p.m. Mass of Thanksgiving
St. Patrick's Cathedral
Terence Cardinal Cooke - Main Celebrant
- 5:00 p.m. Hospitality Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. Commemorative Celebration
St. Patrick's Cathedral

November 22

- 10:00 a.m. Guided Bus Tour of places special
to us in our history
- 3:00 p.m. Concert by Gen Verde
Music For Unity And Peace
Hunter College

CHICAGO

December 6

- 2:00 p.m. Gen Verde Concert
Drury Lane Theatre
- 4:30 p.m. Hospitality Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. Gen Verde Concert
Drury Lane Theatre
- 9:00 p.m. Reception
John Hancock — The 95th

December 7

- 6:00 p.m. Open House
Focolare Center, 4822 S. Ellis
- 8:00 p.m. Mass of Thanksgiving
St. Thomas the Apostle Church
John Cardinal Cody presiding

NOVEMBER 21, 3:00 p.m.

2,000 people gather in New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral for the first event of the Twentieth Anniversary Celebration.

When Terence Cardinal Cooke, preceded by Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, Bishop Joseph Pernicone and thirty priests, walks toward the altar, the crowds begin to sing—one heart and one soul.

It is an explosion of joy, of gratitude to God; and a beautiful occasion to give him glory together.

"When it comes to celebrations the members of the Focolare Movement cannot be outdone. I guess it is that way now, as they celebrate their twenty years in the United States . . .," the Cardinal would say at the end. "What a beautiful way to celebrate your faith, the message of Jesus that the world needs now more than ever before."

Old and new acquaintances of the Focolare are present. Some as "old" as twenty years. Mamma Rizzo, the landlady of that first Focolare Center on Mulberry Street. She is at ease in the very first pew. She had always said it, that the Movement would grow because it was from God. And many others from the early times in the first rows, together with those coming from the farthest places — San Antonio, Los Angeles, Chicago, Puerto Rico, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver. . .

The Cardinal encouraged all when he said, "Together we celebrate the Twentieth Anniversary of the founding in New York City of the first Focolare Center. Countless blessings have been bestowed upon the Archdiocese of New York, and indeed, upon the entire Catholic Church here in these twenty years."



Reprint: cover of Anniversary Missalette



Terence Cardinal Cooke, Archbishop of New York, highlighted the growth of the Movement all over the world, "since its foundation in Italy in 1943 by the renown Chiara Lubich."

"'Focolare' is the Italian word for hearth or fireplace," he said.

"As we celebrate this Twentieth Anniversary Mass, we thank Almighty God for the spiritual hearth, this fire of the spirit. We are grateful for the warmth of your charity, and for the radiance of your apostolic zeal."



Above, a glimpse of the Cathedral during the homily given by Msgr. Edward Murray of the Archdiocese of Boston, who told how he "met and fell in love with the ideals of the Focolare Movement" during the Second Vatican Council.

Calling the Movement "a new manifestation of the Holy Spirit," he said, "It is a great thing to see in our times the flowering of the Christian message."

"Many of us," Msgr. Murray continued, "have had our lives changed by the Focolare Movement."

And he concluded,

"We thank God for this means of grace he has given us in our times and to our witness."

NOVEMBER 21, 7:00 p.m.

Commemorative Celebration

This heavy title stood for a heart-warming reunion where the Movement's growth was highlighted through experiences of the beginning and of the present. All interspersed with songs by the Gen

Verde,¹ who had come from Europe to share in this celebration and to give their contribution through music and songs.

The evening began with Father Grimaldi focusing on the spirituality of the Movement as a response to the divisions in today's world.

"We know that the Movement started almost forty years ago, in 1943 when Chiara Lubich, our foundress, consecrated herself to God. It has been said, and recognized by the Church, that the charism which has been given to Chiara, and therefore to the Movement, is a charism of unity. If we read her early writings — even before 1943 — we can see signs of this charism, showing that everything which happened later was the fulfillment of God's plan. Chiara obeyed God's call, a call to give Him the first place in her life."

Father Grimaldi went on to give a brief outline of the beginnings of the Movement, explaining how the main points of the spirituality emerged and were understood by Chiara and her first companions.

"In 1944," he continued, "while seeking protection in an air raid shelter during a bombardment,

¹ One of the many expressions of the Focolare Movement, Gen Verde is a musical group which has performed before over 800,000 people all over Europe. See "Gen Verde in Concert," *Living City*, Vol.20, No.12.



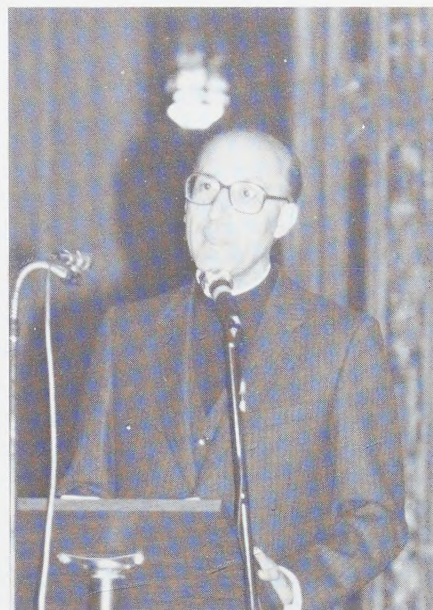
they read in the Gospel of St. John: 'Father, that all may be one, as you and I are one.' They understood that they were called to live for this. Unity became their ideal. Of course, this unity would never have become a reality without the understanding that Jesus on the cross had paid for that unity, and therefore, is the key to any unity we hope to accomplish."

The rapid growth and expansion of the Movement, he explained, can only be attributed to the presence of Jesus in the midst of its members, fruit of their efforts to love one another as Jesus has commanded. The Movement is now present in 146 countries, the latest centers being opened this year in India, Norway, Malta and Ecuador.

"The task of the Movement is to make visible in the Church and in the world that unity brought about by Jesus' presence," he

pointed out, presenting then a picture of the world today — a world filled with contrasts. On the one hand, a growing desire for unity among people, a result of the explosion in the field of mass media and various economic and political developments. On the other hand, we are faced with divisions of every kind: within the family, among different political factions, between nations, even among Christians. "In this context," Father Grimaldi continued, "this spirituality of unity, with its practical implications — a spirituality that teaches us how to make ourselves one with everyone — is the remedy for every division.

"We must be grateful to God for having given us this ideal of life. By living it in our families, in our offices, wherever we are, we can help pave the way for the fulfillment of Jesus' priestly prayer: 'That all may be one.'"



Father Grimaldi, National Director of the Men's Branch of the Focolare in North America, opened the evening's program.

"I will never forget the city," Sharry Silvi told a very attentive audience, speaking about her arrival in New York with Giovanna Vernuccio and Antonio Petrilli in 1961, "as I saw it from the plane for the first time. Incredibly big! A few years later, Chiara Lubich would say of New York:

'This city lends itself to a fire of divine love,' but it was hard to see it, to envision what would happen on that day."

Somebody came to pick them up at the airport and took them to their destinations. For Giovanna and Sharry, it was 140 Mulberry Street. Through some people's kindness, they had been given the use of a small apartment.

Antonio went to live at a YMCA on Broadway. Altogether they knew about ten, twenty people and rather superficially.

"Everything was new, at times a bit overwhelming," Sharry told us. "There were moments

when the world around us seemed like an iceberg hard to melt, and yet it never intimidated us because our ideal was, is bigger. And even if we knew that what we were 'selling' was a revolution — which

was hard to buy when you have many things — we still believed that 'his' was 'the revolution' and the ideal that was burning in our hearts was stronger than anything; that in the end it would win.





Miss Sharry Silvi, National Director of the Women's Branch of the Focolare in North America, speaking of the Movement's growth here, from the earliest days until today.

"And there was something else. How many times sitting on the fire escape of our little apartment on Mulberry Street would we look at the Empire State Building. And we would say, 'The people who build the skyscrapers with great courage and keep building them taller and taller, these people who like the challenge of an always higher goal, will understand our daring ideal of life: that is, to love — to prefer — Jesus Crucified and Forsaken, Jesus in the moment when, suffering the most for us, loved us the most. And he, the key to unity, like a divine alchemist, will transform also for them every pain into joy, every emptiness into fullness, every disunity into unity.'

"And if at times it was the city to show itself to us with his countenance, we could say, 'I don't fear you because I love you.'"

They would travel all over the city by subway to visit the people they knew, carrying an old, heavy 16mm projector and a film of a

Mariapolis¹ which had taken place a few years before in Italy. "It was our way of saying," Sharry explained, "that there were more people besides us in the Movement."

"We were happy and we knew we would remain so as long as we remembered that we were here to live the spirituality of unity; therefore we only had to love one another. The world around us would become one, if we were one."

There was one evening which would prove decisive: "It was late on a Friday night," Sharry recounted. "Unaware of the dangers of a city we did not know, Giovanna and I were traveling by subway, somewhere near Broadway.

"People were going in and out. Serious, troubled faces.

"A cold sense of hopelessness began to take hold of both of us. What were we to do in this immense city! We were like a drop of water in the ocean. Two of us. But it was only a moment. We looked at each other. Yes! We were two young people in New York, but we had promised each other, with the grace of God, to be ready if necessary to die for one another, and so it was possible that Jesus, who has promised to be present among those who are united in his name, were present in our midst. Jesus!

The whole big city with its tall buildings, the bridges, the large avenues seemed to be a crumb in comparison to the power of the Almighty, to the presence of the Almighty.

"How splendid New York seemed to us that night, and how wonderful our adventure to live in order to have him always in our midst. Of that time at the beginning, I remember the joy of his presence.

"Those days imprinted in my heart as a brand of fire that for us 'focolarini' — if we are faithful to our name meaning 'carriers of fire' — nothing else matters but this presence, and our love for the Crucified One.

"We did not yet have books or magazines, leaflets, or even big meetings. We could rely only on

life, and it was helpful to live like that, to give all these things the right importance when they would come."

The year 1964 came, and for the first time, Chiara Lubich would visit this continent. "This people," she said, "seem to me to be particularly ready for the spirit of the Movement."

"The sense that only God remains, that everything else is vanity of vanities was magnified in our souls a thousand times over during those days.

"When she left, I remember seeing New York as an entirely different city. What came to mind was a meditation that Chiara herself had written years before telling us where we could find God: in our brothers and sisters, in the hierarchy, in the Eucharist, in his word. . . 'God is the gold of my city,' read the meditation. From that time on, New York seemed to be a golden city.

"Then," Sharry said, "everything happened. I would like to mention the names of all those who came, among whom were some of Chiara's first companions: Grace De Luca, filled with fire, Enzo Fondi, with his quiet, deep presence, Giosi Guella, Giorgio Battisti . . . Each one left quite a mark."

Sharry outlined the spreading of the Movement to the different cities of this continent: Chicago, Toronto, Boston, San Antonio, Los Angeles . . .

"At the end of this year, we prepared a map placing little red dots wherever there are people who want to live the spirituality of the Focolare. The continent was covered with little dots. The Movement has reached the province of Yukon, the states of Alaska, Nevada, the desert of Arizona . . .

1) Mariapolis is the summer gathering of the Focolare Movement held every year in many countries all over the world.

2) Meditations, by Chiara Lubich, New City Press, 1974, p. 71.

dots that looked scattered at random, following a plan of God we didn't know of.

"Two schools of formation for the American focolarini were opened in New York, a Mariapolis Center in Chicago for the formation of members, and vocations to all the branches and groups within the Movement sprang up.

"Today there are American or Canadian focolarini in Centers here, in Loppiano, the little city near Florence that the Movement has built, in Rocca di Papa working for the Headquarters of the Movement and even in distant Australia.

"There are magazines published here, a Publishing House, four summer Mariapolis, hundreds of gatherings, and volunteers and gen everywhere.

"The revolution we were dreaming of," Sharry continued, "has taken place, but it is a silent one. There is nothing spectacular about the Movement if we measure things with the yardstick of the world. It is like a wave of love, a

powerful wave of love going through the world, and love never imposes itself. It is like the sun at springtime which makes the ground give life through the seeds which were there, but hidden and in need of warmth.

"We would like to be this love, this supernatural love, a presence of unity to help bring an even stronger unity within the Church, to help build it among Christians, to reach out as much as possible to faithful of all religions, to build bridges with all people of good will.

"Twenty years," Sharry concluded. "Seeing the development of the Movement many have asked us, especially in these past days, if we are happy with its success; or they told us that we should be, and wondered if this was what we had expected.

"We can only answer that we did not expect anything. How successful the Movement has been we don't know because when it comes to 'his' work, success

cannot be measured in figures, in houses opened . . .

"How do you measure the spiritual depths that people have reached, the new conviction of many that only God counts, or the desire to strive toward sanctity together, or a deeper love for the Church?

"How do you measure these things? Only God knows. Also because only God knows what his plan was for these twenty years. How far or close we have come to fulfilling it, we don't know. We should ask him if he is happy.

"If there have been fruits, they are his.

"It is up to us to thank him with all our hearts and to recommit ourselves to doing his will in each present moment in order to accomplish an always deeper unity, thus contributing to the fulfillment, not only of his plan on us, or the Focolare, or North America — but on all of humanity, because unity is God's will for humanity."

And then came the experiences.

Father Julian Stead, a Benedictine monk, met the Movement in Italy, six years before it was to reach North America. Once more in the United States, he would write Chiara asking her to establish a Focolare Center here.

"What was it that then captivated me, and that captivates me now? Jesus in the midst. I had met individual saints before, individuals in whom one felt the presence of God, but I had never before felt the presence of Christ in a group, as such. I realized that this was a new charism in the Church, and that Jesus was inviting me to be a part of it.

"In the spring of 1962, I had the joy of visiting the first Focolare Center in New York, and here we are now, sharing our joy."

Rosalyn Richardson-Coleman's experience began only two years after the opening of the Center in

New York City. With a background of a life-time of discrimination and ostracism on the part of white people toward her, and resentment and distrust on her part toward them, she told of her powerful encounter with the Movement when she understood "that there was no excuse for me to exclude anyone from my love, no matter how much I had suffered,

no matter how much I had been offended. I said 'yes' to loving God in each person I meet. My life is full."

Mike Murray, a young social worker in Harlem, told how the spirit of the Focolare Movement helped him to understand in a deeper way "the presence of God in the Gospel, in my neighbor, and

Following the experiences, Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, gave the invocation:

"This evening we have listened to experiences concerning the life of a work of God in the Church — and we want to thank Him for the fruits that this charism of unity has brought about here and all over the world.

"With a sense of deep gratitude to God we invoke His blessing for the years to come and ask Him that this spirit of unity may spread always more for the good of many, many people everywhere."

in myself. Above all," he said, "I have learned how to love in a way that creates a bond of unity, unity that goes beyond any human barrier."

Most of the boys with whom Mike works don't know anything about God, he related. But he has found that when he tries to live the Gospel, they experience God, and he can convey God's love to them even without speaking about him.

Edna Craig came to know the Movement at a time when even though she had a beautiful family,

a good job, good health, she still felt "something deep inside of me was missing."

"When I met the Focolare," she said, "I returned home convinced that it is possible to live the Gospel in everyday life. I am a Baptist, and many of the members of my Church live the spirituality of the Focolare Movement with me. I thank God to be able to live and work for him in this Movement of unity."

The experience of trying to live in the family the spirituality of the Focolare was shared by John and Mary Welch.

It is the challenge of living "this purified mutual love between ourselves," John said. "We have learned," Mary said, "that we have the possibility of living daily with Jesus in our midst. We have come to understand that this spirituality does not mean to seek God in an isolated sanctity. Rather it is a collective sanctity: it is unity. We help one another when the way gets confusing or difficult, all of us traveling together to God."

With the words of the Invocation that followed, the evening's program came to a close.

November 22, 10:00 a.m.: After a Mass at the United Nation's Holy Family Church, a special guided bus tour took members and friends of the Movement to some places in New York City which are special to the history of the Movement here, like the site of the first Focolare Center.

All along the way, excerpts from Chiara's impressions of North America were read.

In the first of her five visits to this continent, she had written:

"I was deeply struck with this country; I had a beautiful impression of it. I have visited many nations in Europe and South America and also in Asia, but this nation seems to me to be particularly ready for the spirit of the Movement. I have noticed great internationality and great simplicity. At Mass I prayed for the Movement in this continent and I hope Jesus will listen to my prayer because I am praying for the spreading of his kingdom."

*Outside Holy Family Church
the group
gathers for the bus tour
of many sites in the city
now part
of the Movement's
history here.*



GEN VERDE CONCERT

Minutes before the performance begins: two thousand spectators fill Hunter College's Assembly Hall in Manhattan. The people attending the show are as diverse as the nineteen performers themselves, coming from twelve different countries.



NOVEMBER 22, 3:00 p.m. — Hunter College, Assembly Hall, Manhattan

The Gen Verde after having sung at the Mass of Thanksgiving and the Commemorative Celebration, presented their folk-rock opera.

"What's better than fantastic and great?" someone would ask at the end of the performance, trying to find the right words to write down his impression of the concert he had just seen.

The nineteen young performers of Gen Verde had shared "their" story — the story of every person in search of a world that could be called "home." Through mime, dance and music, they conveyed the experience of peoples drawn together by the desire to live in harmony. Though reality seems to crush this hope, their search for unity continues until the discovery of God as Love shines out. They sing their joy in finding that the Gospel put into practice is the rock upon which they can build their "home."

The second half of the show unfolds experiences of a life based on the Scriptures. "Jesus died out of love for us," they sing. And our love for him gives us the key to make this world a "home."

"Rise up world and sing your song, love can't be destroyed," they cry out — a finale born from experience and sung out with joy.

CHICAGO

During the following weekend, the Celebration continues in Chicago.

December 6, 2:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.: Gen Verde repeats the concert with great success, "One World, One Home." Many leave convinced that unity is possible.

John Cardinal Cody, Archbishop of Chicago, attending the evening concert, would tell the crowd that had welcomed him with the warmest applause: "Now I have heard all the best choirs in the world — The Sistine Chapel Choir in the Vatican, the

Pauline Chapel Choir, and now the Gen Verde. And all that remains for me now is to hear the choir of angels."

December 7, 6:00 p.m.: Open House, at the Men's Focolare Center, 4822, So. Ellis: Here two celebrations become one. It was on December 7, 1943, in fact, that Chiara Lubich consecrated her life to God. That date is considered the beginning of the Focolare Movement.

December 7, 8:00 p.m.: A Thanksgiving Mass is celebrated at St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Car-

dinal Cody, presiding, will say at the end, remembering the Anniversary: "Having known Chiara, and having seen how much she was able to accomplish through her devotion, through her fidelity, through her resignation to the will of Mary, has made me one of the devotees of the Focolare."

The Anniversary Celebration has ended. It has been an explosion of joy, leaving in all a deep sense that the days had been not only a chance to look at the growth of the Movement here, but also a new beginning.

GEN VERDE

First U.S. Tour

Chicago's famous Drury Lane Theatre presents a name new to American audiences: *Gen Verde*.

On their first tour of the United States, on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Focolare Movement in North America, *Gen Verde* performed before 8,400 persons in New York and Chicago.

It is a new step in a long line of successes: with more than forty tours behind them, a record of five hundred and fifty concerts, *Gen Verde* has performed before more than 800,000 people all across Europe.



At the end of the first half of the folk-rock opera, *Gen Verde* sings out their conviction, their joy:

*"A new sun is a'rising
A new dawn is a'breaking
Rise up world, it is morning
Love is shining on this world
again!
Let your tamborines ring out
Let the echo carry through
Love fills the world like the
morning sun . . .
Life is born again!"*

The Gen Verde received standing ovations wherever they performed and many of those who attended the concerts in New York as well as Chicago, left impressions like the following:

"You people have touched me deeply. You have brought a great deal of joy and hope into my life," one young spectator wrote.

"Many times I was moved to tears. You put to music many of my dreams for the world," wrote another.

"There are not enough adjectives in the English language to describe this experience," wrote a young woman. "Moving, enthusiastic, vibrant, realistic — simply joyous! Bravo Gen Verde! You made me very happy!"

"Please come back. This has been a true celebration of life and his love for us. Breathtaking! Every man, woman, and child in America should see you!" wrote a young couple.

"You can see what they dance is true; they live it," wrote a student.

"Your show, in your songs and dances, in your manner towards one another and with the audience, reveals 'unity.' It is obvious. What you sing must be how you live, for it comes across as really authentic. Now, I believe even more in the power of love."

"It brought me near to God."

"Stupendous, fabulous! It made me feel like going up there and joining in their songs. I truly believe what you believe."

"To me it was an explosion of joy. A beautiful expression of love, cause for hope."

Excellent! The wording of your songs welled tears in my eyes."

The show is beautiful. I too want to find one home in this world."



During the second part of the show, each of the performers reveals her own story. Here Marie Therese Henderson from Scotland sings:

*"It's getting harder each day
to live in a world where you
have to go against the current.
And yet you say to me,
'Do not be afraid of those
who can kill the body,
but cannot kill the soul.'"*

To the right, some of the members of Gen Verde shortly before their departure for Loppiano, Italy, where they live and work whenever not on tour. They would set immediately to work in preparation for their upcoming month-long tour throughout Spain.



A CONVERSATION FROM LONDON . . .

As many of our readers will recall, Chiara Lubich visited London last June where she met with the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, George Cardinal Hume, and also had a private audience with Archbishop Robert Runcie, Primate of the Church in England and Honorary Head of the Anglican Communion.

On Saturday, June 13, about 400 members of the Focolare from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland came to London to meet with Chiara. We are reprinting here some of her answers to the many questions asked of her by the community. To maintain the spontaneity of this dialogue, the order of the spoken rather than the written word has been retained.

After 38 years in which you have lived the Ideal, can you tell us who Jesus Forsaken is for you?

Chiara: Who is Jesus Forsaken for me? I'll bring everything into the open. I'll tell you who Jesus Forsaken is for me now, in this moment. I have learned with you to love him and to embrace him in sufferings, 'Always, immediately and with joy.' But since Jesus Forsaken is our Crucified Love, he must be everything for us; he must never be missing, and so when there are no sufferings, we must look around for something which resembles him. We have seen that in order to live the present moment really well, to live the will of God well, we have to cut off everything which is not the will of God in this present moment; we must give up everything that is not exactly the will of God. This renunciation is the cross, and we see Jesus Forsaken in it and we are happy.

Another way of loving him in this period has been seeing him in all the separations of the Church. There we see his face, and we must embrace these separations. They must not make us brake or stop, but launch us out to love Jesus Forsaken and then, with this love, we can take steps forward.

The Focolarini are those who have chosen the 'narrow door.' As a Gen I feel I should be open to all the vocations in the Work of Mary.

Can I fulfill this phrase of the Gospel choosing any way?

Chiara: You ask if in any vocation you could find the narrow door. I'd say, "Yes, provided you choose the path that God wants for you." Then certainly you'll find the 'narrow door' and you can become a saint.

I am involved in a New Humanity project with the help of other volunteers, of my brother and with other people of good will. What are the characteristics which make this an action of New Humanity, and how is it different from other actions taken by people in similar circumstances?

Chiara: An action carried out as New Humanity is distinct from other actions for this reason: because it is thought up with Jesus in the midst, it is led by Jesus in the midst, it is concluded by Jesus in the midst. Because Jesus in our midst brings his spirit, which is the Holy Spirit, who renews things and makes humanity new.

Chiara, you have many contacts with leaders of various Christian Churches. What point do you think our path towards unity has reached?

Chiara: I have a great hope. . . not just a great hope, but a very great hope. Do you know why? Not so much for what these leaders say, but because you feel that the Holy

Spirit is at their shoulders, driving them on to unity. He is consuming them so that they will reach unity and this is really evident. Since they are also full of good will, the Holy Spirit can accomplish many things. And also I have seen some of the work being done for unity and this too gives me great hope. This morning, for instance, I read a document which had been drawn up by a mixed commission of Catholics and Lutherans set up by the Pope when he was visiting Germany. A few days ago, on the Feast of Pentecost, the first document of the mixed commission on the Creed was issued on the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of the Council of Constantinople. It is the first document since the Reformation made by a mixed commission of not only Catholics and Lutherans, but also with nine other ecclesiastical communities or churches. There it is the Holy Spirit who is working. I read this document, it is beautiful, and it concludes saying that God, who is one and three (and this was confirmed by that Council), is pushing the churches to unity. So we can see that we are going ahead.

Before coming to England, I wanted to look in depth at the relations between Catholics and Anglicans, and I read the three documents of the mixed commission which are so important and there too, you can see the surprises of the Holy Spirit.

Looking at things also from a Catholic point of view, we see that when there is a certain acceptance of the Pope, when the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is acknowledged, then we can hope because these are two strong bonds of unity. I have also read an article in our review, 'Nuova Umanita,' about the relationships between Catholics and Orthodox, written by a member of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. It's marvellous to see what stage we've reached. Then we'll reach a point when one Church will push the other! We must believe that the Holy Spirit is stronger than us. This is from the point of view of the theologians who are doing all this work which will then be taken into considera-

tion by the leaders of the Churches, and they'll give the Churches' view. Then the work will go further. . . But my hope is born too from what the Holy Spirit is doing at grassroots level, but also through the Movement, for instance.

Reciprocal love is absolutely essential in order to be Christians because we have a common Baptism which we must live. This creates a marvellous foundation for theological dialogue.

The ethical teaching of the Work of Mary is that of the Catholic Church. Will Anglicans with various commitments in the Movement follow this, or should they follow the teaching of the Anglican Church? How can those who do this be of one mind with you?

Chiara: I want to answer this problem in this way. There is a desire on the part of the Catholics and on the part of the Anglicans to be of one mind with me. I have the impression that, as we progress on our way towards unity, full unity, where we'll have one faith, it is very important to carry out the will of God. The Catholics know what to do; they listen to their conscience and they follow the directions given by the Church. The Anglicans have their conscience, they give importance to their conscience. Listen to what God is saying to you. I have the impression that one never makes mistakes in following him. So you will say, "Are we then in two different positions?" Yes, but we put our feet in the same will of God. Since each of us is in the will of God, then there is that unity which God wants for us now. Then we go on. Blessings come from God on this foundation.

We have several contacts with the faithful of non-Christian religions, and a relationship of real unity in mutual love has been brought about with them. In this way we have discovered how much we have in common. However, when we meet disunity and suffering, our solution is Jesus Forsaken, but they do not know him. How can we go ahead at this point?



The Focolare Movement has been in the British Isles now since 1960. Begun with only a handful of people scattered throughout England, the Movement now numbers several thousand, and includes among its members Christians of different denominations.

This ecumenical dialogue began in 1965 and, over the years, has steadily gone ahead as highlighted by Chiara's visit to London last June. In the picture, we see Chiara with some of the Anglican representatives of the Movement.

Chiara: According to me there is only one path, that we should be Jesus Forsaken for them. We should carry their cross in such a way as to surprise them when they feel that the weight of this cross has been lifted from them; and we surprise them twice, three times, a hundred times, until at last they will ask the secret, "Who is making you do this?" Then we will say like St. Paul, "I only know Christ and Christ crucified."

In a country like Scotland there are many Presbyterians who adhere to Christian principles, but they only have to hear you speak about Rome or Catholicism and they become rigid. How would you advise us to approach them and give them the Ideal since they wish to love Jesus in their neighbors?

Chiara: The first thing I would say is that we should always keep Jesus in our midst so that he can lead us along and show us the way. He should be there giving the witness. Then we should behave and act, taking into consideration what unites us and not what divides us. So if talking about the Pope and talking about Rome an-

noys other people, then we should not annoy them; we should not talk about these things. The moment will come when they will ask us. Then we can talk, but there is no need to go on emphasizing them before people ask. I think that "losing" things which are so important for us will bring about great fruit.

As the Work of Mary enters into the Anglican Church, how can we be sure that we remain one Work of Mary and don't become two Works of Mary?

Chiara: At this point I want to tell you about a conversation I had with Cardinal Hume two days ago. I raised this problem with him. Our Movement now among the Anglicans is no longer made up just of sympathizers or adherents. All the vocations that are in the Movement exist in the Anglican Church: the focolarini, the volunteers, the Gen, the New Families, and also the priests. There are also bishops who are "friends of the Movement" who, obviously, are not juridically linked with the Movement but are friends. As we have in the Catholic

(continued on page 28)

LC TIE LINE throughout the world

GOING TO SANCTITY TOGETHER

Compiled by
SILVANA VERONESI

With this issue we begin a new series of articles entitled, "Living City Tie Line Throughout the World," which we are certain will be of great interest to many of our readers.

At the end of the year 1980, Chiara Lubich, foundress of the Focolare Movement, meeting with about 1,000 young people at the Mariapolis Center of Rocca di Papa, Italy, invited them to make an original resolution for the year 1981: to make the commitment of working toward sanctity during that year.

The impetus to take on this resolution came from the chance reading of the life story of Sister Maria Gabriella of the Trappists in Grottaferrata, Italy. Someone from our own day and age, Sister Maria Gabriella, despite a rebellious and headstrong character, reached sanctity in just a few years.

If this is the case, Chiara asked herself, then why can't we too reach sanctity? And so she launched the invitation also to all of us.

Very many members and friends of the Movement joined in this resolution of beginning this race toward sanctity. During 1981, the initial group continued to grow, and now numbers more than 42,000 people.

On May 19, referring to the beginning of the Movement, Chiara wrote: "We were keenly aware that God wanted us to love our neighbor, he wanted unity. . . . Therefore, we must realize that we will reach sanctity only if we bring the others with us to the same goal."

In this way, from these thoughts and from reading Psalm 84:6, "Happy the men whose strength



An exchange of gifts in the Horinkaku Guesthall, where on December 19, a long and important conversation between Chiara Lubich and Nikkyo Niwano, president of the Rissho Kosei-kai and of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, took place. It was the first of a series of meetings which Chiara was to have with the Buddhist world, part of her two-month trip to various countries in Asia.

you are! Their hearts are set upon the pilgrimage," the idea of life as a pilgrimage that we could take together, a sort of Holy Journey towards eternity, took shape — a journey which we set out on together each day with joy.

In order to be able to go ahead together and receive the encouragement we need, we thought of this new column, which will appear in every issue of Living City. In it Chiara Lubich herself will share her insights, her experiences of life to help us in this wonderful journey towards the goal.

And since so many of us are scattered throughout the world, we will include the news which continually arrives from the different countries where the Movement is present.

Each month, then, through these articles, we will remain in close contact with one another, as fellow companions on this "journey."

DIRECT FROM TOKYO

The news reported in this LC Tie Line comes direct from Tokyo, the first stop in a trip undertaken by Chiara Lubich, foundress of the Focolare Movement, and a group of focolarini¹ who have different responsibilities within the Movement, and who had accompanied her from Rome.

They would visit many of the Focolare communities, including those in Korea, Hong Kong, Taipei, the Philippines, Australia, Thailand, and the most recently formed one in India. The next LC Tie Lines will cover these visits.

The trip to Japan offered an opportunity to respond to the invitation extended by Nikkyo Niwano, president and founder of the Rissho Kosei-kai, a wide-spread lay movement in Japan which seeks to revive the religious Buddhist spirit. Nikkyo Niwano had invited Chiara to present the experience of the Focolare Movement to his followers.

FROM THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

Recently I saw a program on TV. Very young girl athletes, primarily from Eastern European countries, were doing beautiful exercises of artistic gymnastics. They were really magnificent as they repeated their somersaults. What perfection you could see in every move! How much harmony, and how graceful they were! They seemed to be in perfect control of every movement. Even the most difficult exercises appeared to be absolutely natural. In this moment they are the best in the world.

As I was admiring their skill, I felt within me a pressing invitation. It was as though someone were telling me, "You too, all of you, must become world champions." "Champions? In what?" "In loving God. But do you know how much work these young athletes have done to reach this point — repeating day after day, hour after hour, the same exercises, without ever stopping? You too, then, all of you have to do the same."

"When?" "In the present moment, always, without ever stopping."

I felt in my heart a great desire to work, moment by moment, to reach perfection.

St. Francis de Sales said that a good-natured person, by repeatedly indulging in vices, will little by little develop those vices. So I would say then that there is no one so bad, who by repeatedly practicing virtuous acts, will not develop the habit of virtue.

Let's take courage then! If we train ourselves we will become world champions in loving God.

This is my wish for you in this last month of the year.

The Word of Life is: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say."¹ We too must say, as Mary did, "Let it be done to me as you say." And what is the word that God has said to our Movement?² We know it is unity. We must become champions in unity. Unity with God, with his will in the present moment, and unity with our neighbors, with each neighbor we meet during the day.

Ahead then — let us practice without wasting precious moments! What is awaiting us is not a golden medal, but Heaven. And, as a result, there will be a lot of good for our brothers and sisters, because of the Communion of Saints.

FROM THE MONTH OF JANUARY

To give life to Jesus in our midst is our primary duty. It is the fundamental reason for which our Movement exists. If we live and always renew our mutual love, Jesus in a certain way, comes to life and lives in our midst. And it is Jesus present in our midst, that we are all called to offer to the world.

And perhaps this is the reason why in these days a thought keeps persistently coming back to my mind: "You can't afford the luxury of going to sanctity if the Saint is not in your midst. You cannot live in the illusion of becoming perfect, if the One who is perfect is not among you."

What are we to do then?

I think the right way for us is the following: to establish and re-establish Jesus' presence among us, having that love which is service and understanding; that love which leads us to share the suffering,

burdens, anxieties, and also joys of our brothers and sisters; a love which puts up with everything, forgives everything — the typical love of a Christian.

We must make sure that, through this love, the Risen Lord, who has promised to be with his Church until the end of the world, is also among us.

On this basis, we should go ahead and live, moment by moment, the will of God — to live it well, perfectly, giving up radically our own will.

In this way we will become real champions of unity — unity with our neighbors and with God.

To all, to everyone, Happy New Year!

And remember that Jesus can be in our midst also at a distance.

CHIARA LUBICH

1) December Word of Life, see *Living City*, Vol. 20, no. 12.

2) Chiara is speaking to the members of the Focolare Movement.

The Japanese edition of the book *Chiara* by Edwin Robertson, translated by a married focolarino, Norio Kudo, which the Rissho Koseikai had just published, was presented to Chiara upon her arrival.

In an interview with the Vatican Radio shortly before her departure, Chiara had said, "I am going to offer my Christian experience to the Buddhists as they have asked me to do.

"I do not know," she said, "what will happen: if it will be the beginning of a dialogue, or the development of a more profound knowledge of our religion on their part

(continued from page 15)

and of their religion on ours, or the discovery of eventual points of contact for going ahead together on this 'holy journey of life.' I will tell you when I return."

December 19: Chiara Lubich, invited for a luncheon at the International Center of the Rissho Kosei-kai, was received by President Nikkyo Niwano and his executive staff.

It is an historical date for the Focolare Movement. If 1960 had marked the beginning of a dialogue with other Christian Churches, this 19th of December marks for us the opening of a dialogue with other religions.

December 20: Two hundred and fifty members and friends of the Focolare Movement, coming from all over Japan, gathered at the Sophia University for a meeting that was characterized by a family-like atmosphere.

December 23: A large group of young Buddhists of the Rissho Kosei-kai who had already come in contact with the Focolare in Loppiano, the United States and the Philippines had asked to know more about the spirituality and the life of the Movement. A gathering was held for this purpose in a "Buddhist parish" located two hours outside of Tokyo. The young Buddhists welcomed the focolarini warmly, and asked them many interesting questions.

December 25: In the Cathedral of Tokyo, Archbishop Peter Seiichi Smirayanagi introduced Chiara Lubich to 300 Catholic priests gathered for the Christmas celebration. She spoke on unity in the experience of the Focolare Movement and, as reported by Vatican Radio, focused on the value of personal witness: It is possible to believe in the words of the priest if — before announcing the Word of God — priests are themselves witnesses of Jesus' New Commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you," and of the love of Christ in the world.

RELATIONSHIPS



Chiara Lubich and Igino Giordani. Known as "Foco" within the Movement, he was identified by Chiara as a "co-founder" of the Focolare. He clearly envisioned from the beginning that this ideal of life contained the seed of a new humanity.

Any attempt to achieve positive and lasting social changes should be based on the key issue of "Relationships among people."

Here we would like to present briefly a movement concerned with social action, promoted by individuals who want to live the spirituality of the Focolare Movement. It is called "The New Humanity Movement" and is open to all people of good will who want to work for a renewal of society. It began fourteen years ago and has spread to many nations all over the world. It tries to emphasize in everything that it does the importance of renewing first of all interpersonal relationships, seen as the fundamental element of life in society. These can then form the basis for promoting a renewal of society from within.

In these pages we present some reflections on the sociological significance of relationships, a short interview with one of the leaders of New Humanity, as well as a few experiences. The experiences are meant to illustrate not so much the outstanding projects of the Movement in favor of human development, but the simpler examples taken from everyday life. They took place in typical work environments and concern things which everyone identify with, and consequently derive ideas and insights for their own lives.

We will cover other important projects of this Movement in the future. Here we will only mention briefly some human development projects taking place in the Third World. Many of our readers may already be familiar with some of these programs from previous issues of Living City.

1) See inside back cover.

rediscovering the person in every neighbor

by TOMMASO SORGI



A sociologist focuses on an urgent question of our times: how to build solid interpersonal relationships.

Sociologists are debating on how to mend the structures of a disintegrating society. Their arguments range from the relationship between roles to the relationship between people.

For some years now the question of social disintegration has frequently given rise to discussion which re-opens with heightened concern at every outburst of terrorist activity. This, its most publicized cause for concern, attracts attention and causes distress in everyone, to the extent that it tends to make one forget that there are many other signs of this deterioration or permanent loss in social awareness. For example, the misunderstandings which threaten and sometimes destroy the intimate relationship of a couple, clashes between young and old, between parents and children; the refusal to generate new life, with violent termination when, despite every precaution, it is conceived; lack of communication even among peer groups; the continuous emergence of new groups of misfits: the "new poor," people denied adequate social relationships; the ideological barriers between individuals, groups, races.

These are just some signs of the increasing difficulty in achieving social cohesion. Today's improved standards of living and political and cultural growth should provide a guarantee to the individual of a more dignified lifestyle, but complications of another sort have arisen. The demands of a consumer society urge us to satisfy the slightest yet inexhaustible ever new needs, and we find ourselves in a breathless race which does not permit us to hear the gasps of those who are running alongside us. Democracy is crumbling in the midst of endless rivalry between individuals, corporations and factions. . . In the end, all sense of solidarity disappears, leaving behind, totally unresolved, the fundamental problem, the very reason for which democracy was established: how to reach economic and political interrelation on an equal footing and how to bind together a nation on the crucial issues of leadership and public administration, establishing direct and continuous contact with them and thus becoming truly involved.

The present situation continues to nurture instability and lack of governmental control on the political plane with self-centered action on the moral plane, aggression and criminal behavior on the social plane and the breakdown of interpersonal relationships. As struc-

ture society grows with its increasing institutions, laws and public services, one finds oneself more and more isolated. However great our numbers may be, however tightly packed together we are, according to the findings of some sociologists, we constitute a "solitary crowd." And Sartre — midway between sociology and philosophy — discovers that we are all part of a "series." We are, in fact, a series of solitary creatures: "loneliness which we have experienced, loneliness which is a way of life, loneliness as the outcome of isolation in a society which creates the masses."

The question asked by people is this: "What can be done to mend the frayed edges of the fabric of society?" The answer must be sought at two levels, both internally and externally; that is, in personal standards and in social relationships, bearing in mind that the two cannot be separated. It can be said that the impoverishment of social relationships becomes purely formal: they are only conventional courtesies, impersonal and professional customs; they lose their value, their human element and they no longer make sense. It follows that since life is made up largely of relationships, even life itself loses much of its meaning.

I was involved in a small but revealing incident. A customer in a bank was complaining, politely, because the clerk was dealing with the customers out of turn. The clerk tried to justify himself by saying, "How should I know who is next?" It was then that I suggested, "Could you not perhaps look at us?"

For a few minutes I had been watching him in my role as an observer of social behavior. His left hand flicked through the cards and his eyes were cast down in concentration on the figures. He never raised his head once to look at us. We were less than customers. We had become our files. They "existed" and we did not "exist." For the bank clerk there was no contact with people but with things — the cards. His own task had to be carried out without error — bank procedure. He was totally absorbed in his role which he performed with meticulous care.

Those of us waiting in the bank had no contact with him as an individual. We did not relate to one another either. Each of us was cast in the role of the hasty customer waiting impatiently for any bank clerk to perform the required service. We were a series of people, users of the bank service, each of us a non-person for the other, a restraint, an obstacle in the race for service.

Contacts like this are not only impersonal and disinterested, as some social psychologists have explained. If it were only a case of harmless indifference! The trouble is that in situations such as this, each of us, to some extent, diminishes the existence of the other, so that by evening, after dozens of similar contacts, we find that our own humanity has been eroded with the impression of one's body having been gnawed at through dozens of such dissatisfactory contacts. God alone knows what we may have inflicted on others.

Of course, the whole day is not spent in this way, but it is certainly a dominant quality of life today; a way of living which consists for the main part of relationships

which the sociologists call "secondary relationships." They bear the stamp of this industrial, consumer society which is built on the division of labor and the necessity to exchange highly specialized services.

Sociologists, psychologists and particularly philosophers are trying to show us another way of life and to produce models of a more human society. There is a general call for "primary relationships" based on personal knowledge and situations where we can be "face-to-face" with one another, with the recognition that we belong to the same group, acting no longer through selfish motivation but to promote solidarity.

There are abundant suggestions for the formation of new "sociometric" groups based on the natural choice of mutual appeal. There are some fine analyses of thriving forms of socialization, like the "Us" of one psychologist who sees here the means to overcome the "I-other" conflict, in order to reach levels of mutual interpenetration, a mutual relationship which continues to grow until it becomes "communion."

However, such references are to small groups usually; the human sciences, apart from providing fine analyses, do not seem able to offer ideas and appropriate stimuli when faced with actual situations like the one referred to in the bank. Yet every day, we all find ourselves in thousands of situations similar to that one when we are outside our own little circle of friends, family, relatives and colleagues, and unable to choose an opposite number to suit our own tastes. Everyone has to operate within situations where, without any pre-formed intention, a relationship is made, not between people, but between roles in a contact based on "social division" where there is one who is paid to give and one who asks.

The teacher and the pupil, the doctor and the patient, the manager or owner of a company and the worker, the official and the public, the artist and the audience or reader, the politician and the elector: all of these people are cases of contacts in vertical rela-

tionships. There is a dominant role for some and a subservient role for others in social frameworks which, objectively speaking, cannot be done away with. In practice, the doctor cannot expect to receive medicine from the patient, nor the teacher to learn the alphabet from the pupil. But their subjective, interior relationships (soul to soul) can be of a different kind.

Each can put him or herself in the other's shoes. They can recognize in the other person 'someone who is not me,' but 'another me,' so that even if the external attributes are unequal, their common humanity unites them and is highlighted in this horizontal relationship.

There can be established on both sides, not a tension arising from each demanding and requiring something from the other, but an understanding which permits each one to give freely whatever he or she has to give to the other, as if he or she were giving it to themselves. It is possible to emerge from the cold and impersonal role relationships which create distance and estrange us from one another, and place us either higher up or lower down on the social ladder. We can enter into personal relationships which generate nearness.

This is the key point: nearness. It is a question of recognizing the other person as a neighbor. It means transforming our relationship with others from a competition in which the goal is "to have" into a race in order "to give."

The need for such a revolution in human relationships has been expressed by many social scientists who talk about altruism and fraternity. However some revolutions are not brought about by theories nor even by machine guns. A basic problem always remains for mankind.

We are unable to build relationships with 'no strings attached' if our heart is not filled with love, capable of giving even to the point of sacrificing ourselves. We cannot build fraternal relationships with others if we do not develop a deep relationship with a Father whom we share. We cannot be ready to rediscover the **person** in our neighbors if within us we do not have burning, a strong light.

WHAT THE NEW HUMANITY MOVEMENT WANTS

An interview with GIULIO MARCHESI

Giulio Marchesi is an engineer and one of the leaders of the New Humanity Movement.

We asked Mr. Marchesi to outline the aims and the background of the Movement and to answer some of our questions on its work today.

Giulio Marchesi: "New Humanity" has been active for the past thirteen years. To have a clear idea of why and how it came into being, we need to look back for a moment to the very beginning of the Focolare Movement which provided the inspiration for New Humanity. As with every new movement born in the Church, the Focolare Movement has been nurtured through a special grace, a charism, which gradually brought about also its international development as its spirituality was shared by always larger groups of people, from its roots during the last war, around Chiara Lubich, the foundress, and her first companions, right up to the present day.

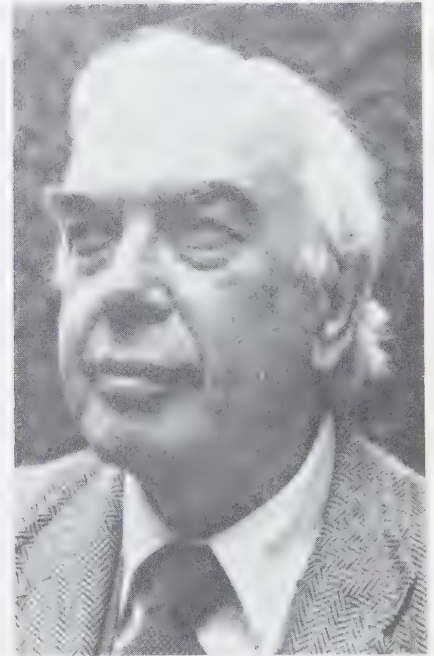
At the same time, within the Movement there was a growth of different expressions of its life, as varied as the persons who welcomed its spirituality. The branch of the focolarini arose from people called to a total commitment in a life consecrated to God. The volunteers arose from those who desired to live the same ideal — also with a total commitment — but as

lay people and leaven in society. And similarly with other groups with various forms of involvement.

The Focolare Movement is the soul of these various expressions of the same ideal: that of unity in the love of Christ, put into practice among people of all vocations and from every country, living out the prayer of Jesus to the Father: "That all may be one."

Among those who are involved in the Movement there are those who are particularly involved in activities in society, not because they consider them their aim but because they are aware that God, through circumstances, has guided them to those particular positions so as to use their personal qualities and abilities.

This is why we felt the need to create new expressions of the Focolare Movement which would show the same ideal being lived in, and renewing the most varied areas of society, each with its own specific activities. For this to happen, there had to be a fusion between the intrinsic features of such an activity



and the spirituality of the Movement. There had to be some people committed to the spirituality who would immerse themselves in the spheres of work, of art, of education, etc., so much so that the workers, the artists, the teachers and so on might accept them and allow them to share in the fears, anxieties and aspirations relevant to these various fields. Through the presence of the members of the Movement, these people might then be able to experience the spirit of the charism.

Q: But is it sufficient to rely so much on the direct action of a charism to solve problems which require a process of rational research, cultural mediation, study and analysis in order to get adequate and humanly acceptable solutions capable of influencing the social fabric of a particular country or culture at a determined moment in its history?

A: Of course it would not be enough if we overlooked that indispensable aspect of cultural medi-

at the service of society

Moreover, the Movement as a whole is now experiencing a new spring-time as regards going out to assist others, through the New Humanity Movement, which is animated by members of the Focolare Movement and guided by its spirit. This Movement for a New Humanity has timidly but decisively put itself at the service of society, particularly today's poor: the drug addicts, the alienated, the unemployed, the sinners, the amoral, the unbelievers.

"Die for our people" is the motto of this operation which re-echoes and relives what Jesus did.

In this way we live and work, awaiting the day when Jesus can say to all of us: "I was an outsider and you brought me into your community. I was on drugs and you gave me back true happiness. I was unemployed and you found me a job. I had no standards to live by, and you taught me God's law. I was without God, and you made me rediscover him as Love, by drawing me into your own divine adventure."

CHIARA LUBICH

(Excerpt taken from "When did we see you, Lord," New City Press, N.Y. 1979)

ation, which we certainly would not do. But having said that, keeping strictly linked to the charism is essential if we want what we are doing on a social level to have a lasting value. We are, in fact, talking about the same charism which inspires the Focolare Movement but which, in New Humanity, has a wide field of application. Another difference is that these new groups were destined from the start for a very much wider and more rapid expansion. Thus, from the single stem of the Focolare Movement grew the so-called mass movements and one of these is of course New Humanity of which the volunteers in particular make up the core.

Q: Every movement with a social commitment has its own way of tackling problems. How does the New Humanity Movement operate in the various fields in which it is involved?

A: One of the characteristics of New Humanity is that it works in "worlds," which means that people who are involved in the same sphere of activity come together in groups, even though they may have very different functions. The 'world' of education, for example, includes teachers, students, non-teaching personnel, and parents, and the 'world' of work would include employers and employees as well as trade unionists and so on. We call these groups 'worlds' because we do not like putting people into categories as this encourages them to

look at problems from their own narrow point of view and creates conflict. Instead 'world' means unity and relationship.

Q: It seems to me that New Humanity puts all its faith in relationships, but do you think that changing relationships is enough to change society? Don't the structures have to be renewed too?

A: Of course! There are those who start by trying to change the structures first of all, in the hope that relationships and society as a whole will be changed. The Movement has a different line. Over years of experience its aim has been not to create new structures but new relationships, weaving a new social fabric which renews all aspects of society. The structures are changed too, as a consequence, but it is not New Humanity's role to work out detailed solutions. This is the task of those who live in and make up this new social fabric and who try to build up new structures drawing freely and in different ways on their own experience.

Just as to make clothes, you first need a piece of cloth of a given color; the various garments you make from it may well differ one from the other, so too, society can be seen not so much as a group of juridically-linked structures but essentially as a social body — almost like a living person in whom a new experience is maturing, with a renewed spirit which will produce new behavioral patterns and new structures.

This is why the ideal New Humanity shares with the Focolare Movement should be seen in the lives and relationships of those involved in the various 'worlds' to the extent that other people might recognize the need to apply it in their own specific fields of action in order to achieve the best possible results.

Obviously the New Humanity Movement is autonomous in itself and therefore free to act on its own initiative, as long as it does not radically alter the substance of the ideal it shares with the Focolare Movement.

Q. This year there have been five conferences for the 'worlds' of politics, health, education, work and art. What were your impressions of these conferences?

A: Each year, New Humanity holds its own congress which is split up into five sections or sub-congresses. This has been taking place for the last thirteen years but this year, one was immediately impressed by the growth in maturity which has taken place and which was apparent through the various experiences which were reported and which indicated that a new social fabric was really being formed, even if on a modest scale, and yet one which was capable of expansion.

At the Art conference, for example, the hall was arranged like a great studio, in which the participants, although from differing countries, races, artistic and cultural levels, felt quite at home in a relationship of love among all, a relationship which assumed artistic expression, which one is bound to admit is quite rare in an artistic setting.

In the world of work, it was possible to find a unifying element among previously opposing positions, without suppressing anyone.

The same thing happened in every world, including politics. This was confirmed by the fact that in many instances, members of the New Humanity Movement won in local elections. Even though I would simply like to point out that the New Humanity Movement does not want to become in any way a political party with a political platform of its own.

when relationships change

A small business:

Working together to save a company

We were all working in the metal construction industry and belonged to a New Humanity group. We often found ourselves discussing the problems of this sector of industry and the needs of each part of the work force: from the employee on the shop floor to the trade unionist, from the manager to the contractor. It seemed to us that the first requirement for each person involved was to rediscover the dignity of his own work.

What could we do to put these ideas into effect? The opportunity arose for us when we were able to buy up a small business with twenty employees, which had run into serious difficulties and was in danger of closing down. We studied the problem, each of us making his own expertise and work experience available. When we all agreed, the capital of the company was worked out, in order to draw up the legal documents for the formation of a cooperative.

The approved constitution stated that all members of the cooperative held equal shares; but since in the initial stages not everyone had the required sum available, those who had more gave a loan to those who were short, stating at the same time that the loan would be repayed when the profits from one or more than one undertaking were divided out. So this gave rise to the initial solidarity and no one felt humiliated at not having his whole contribution. This meant a sharing of responsibility which drew upon the practical ability of each member.

With mutual respect for each other's professionalism, the quality of work in the cooperative took a leap forward, because each person felt appreciated to the full in his or her position. As a result, a high level of production was achieved, so much so, that after only four months in operation, finding that

we could not meet all the orders, we felt it advisable to entrust some orders to other firms.

The new cooperative took on some thirteen men who had been employed by the original company, and the members of the cooperative tried to build a relationship with them on both a personal and working level.

Another important fact which we have taken into consideration from the start is that the cooperative needs to be 'self-financing' through the sale of its products, in order to avoid the high interest rate imposed by credit companies. With this in mind, one of the partners with previous experience on the sales side of things looks after customer relations and has managed to obtain orders on highly favor-

able terms. We have seen that much of the success of our cooperative is due to the good relations we have with our customers.

One of the first orders we received from a large Dutch engineering firm confirms this. The order was destined for China. When transactions were completed, we were told, "This is the first time that we have given a contract to a firm without first looking it over and gathering information on it."

We do not know if the firm will succeed in maintaining the present spirit and enthusiasm; something unexpected could happen to change the reasons for which it was first started.

But the main point is this: in spite of its limitations, in its own small way it has served to prove that good



In the famous "barrio" of Tondo in Manila, where human misery and desperation are densely concentrated, groups of the Movement with other Catholic organizations have been working for years to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants. It is work carried out not "for" but "together with" these people, victims of frightening economic and social inequality.

will, honesty, professional ability, and a relationship of solidarity and collaboration among all are the best foundations for any working situation.

Nino Miolo
Italy

A professional speech writer:

"Taking concrete action"

My work is rather specialized: with the help of a computer I draft speeches for politicians who do not have time to write them. My contact with them led me to an early realization of how great their isolation can be; alone with their problems. And so I wondered how I could help them. A small group of us belonging to New Humanity arranged meetings between politicians and ordinary people prepared to listen to them, and to discuss issues with them.

Let me give you an example: We invited along a politician who was responsible for the training of public administrators in Austria. We did not set out to offer any solutions, but we listened to him; we did our best to understand his problems. Likewise, on another occasion with a member of Parliament who spoke to us for a long time about his political anxieties.

One of his greatest worries was his difficulty in establishing any real rapport with people. These politicians depart at the end feeling a little more reassured, not so much by what we say to them as for our readiness to listen to them and by the atmosphere of understanding which they find. We do not solve their specific problems but they leave us in a better frame to tackle them themselves.

In Vienna, we also began a local project aimed at serving others and fostering social awareness. In Scripture, this spirit of service is expressed through actions — concrete signs like the washing of feet, etc., the emphasis on children. And so we saw that there is a way to be socially committed in a local context, and it is the way of concrete signs. In our area, there were several children's playgrounds where the sand was never changed

Jesus in our midst

The essence of Christianity, whether in terms of the community or of salvation, is to have Jesus in our midst. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matt. 18:20).

Think about it. These words are like a new revelation (every time we read the Scriptures unexpected truths are discovered); a revelation which is all the more extraordinary for its evangelical simplicity.

Jesus reveals a possibility for collaboration and union among ourselves and with God. Why then are we wasting our existence striving, sacrificing and spending money in order to fight groups, nations, to bleed and to die?

The passage from Scripture begins like this: "If two of you on earth agree about anything."

On earth: that means anywhere on the whole planet, throughout the five continents: not just in the cloisters or holy places. Charity does away with boundaries and

difficulties. You can make unity with people of all races; on the train, at the office, in the fields, at a cafe and elsewhere, so every one can and must live Christ twenty-four hours a day.

When we put Jesus in our midst we carry out the commandment of love, which in order to achieve unity, obliges the Christian to come out of his shell of egoism and open up to his brothers and sisters, in other words to everyone. This very openness draws others, particularly the young, who are more sensitive and disposed to any plan where courage is needed to achieve a goal, to become more united in Christ.

From awareness such as this emerge citizens who put unity into practice in their daily lives, sharing with others both this idea and its practical application. From this is born a new social awareness which destroys the barriers set up by parties, sects, trends, the distinction of race, caste, or class. It spreads out and goes beyond frontiers until one sees with the eyes of the author of the ancient epistle to Diognetius, "that Christians

even when it got very dirty. We contacted the local authority and they told us that there was no money to cover this expense. We could not change the sand in all of the playgrounds ourselves, but we could change some of them and we did so at our own expense. People's interest was aroused and the word got around. The result was that Vienna's local authority provided the funds for this purpose throughout the city.

Another issue arose from the lack of bicycle paths and when we made a request for money to supply them, we received the same reply about there being no money. So we invited the residents of one district, adults and children to come on a bicycle outing. They came in

thousands. As a result, the local authority has drawn up plans to build more paths.

Yet another matter required attention: one district was cut off because of inadequate public transport. We suggested the introduction of a bus route or the revival of an old tramway system which had been built sixty years earlier by the party in opposition to the one currently in office. We were told that it was impossible, this time for "political reasons." At our own expense we decided to hire a bus which would do this run for one week, free of charge. It was packed right away. As a result, the local authority has decided to introduce a bus service to the district, including it in the traffic proposals for the city.

Franz Achaz, Austria

live in their own land, but as pilgrims; they take part in public life as citizens, but they are detached from everything like strangers; every nation is their native land In other words, Christians are to the world what the soul is to the body."

Of course, progress is made one step at a time. It may take years, maybe centuries; the important thing is not to stop.

In conclusion, this proclamation of the Word teaches us to live in a world where people don't know how to live; only how to die. No man is an island, and we all have contacts with countless human beings.

How do we go about this? The answer is: "With Jesus in our midst."

Within the family, if the couple are bound together by mutual love, Jesus becomes the Master of the home, the counselor, the endless giver of that treasure which is more precious than all others. "Two souls who are united in the

name of Christ, who make unity their ideal, are a divine power in the world," writes Chiara Lubich.

Family problems are resolved by love; and the family becomes a temple if there is Jesus in the midst; if parents and children gather round the table every day, like the twelve apostles at the Last Supper, when Jesus gave them his testament of love.

This criterion must also be applied in the field of work, in order to change conflict into co-operation; the only way to break through deadlock.

The command of Jesus implies an apostolate for which all must work and "strive so that the fabric of society in which they live and work, may be permeated by the spirit of Christ." In this way they become a real society, which means companionship, community, characterized, like the earliest Christian community, by one heart and one mind, where no one suffered hunger and where,

according to early witnesses, people were poor and gave what they had to those in need.

Thus we have the spirit which can lead to social order. To bring about relationships with others through Jesus among us leads to greater solidarity within the community, in every sense — religious, political, social, economic and professional. Even scholars admit that this 'solidarity' is the only alternative to the present state of rivalry and fragmented groups. People have never been so crowded together as they are today and never yet so alone, each man for himself, with no communication with the others. In this context, the impulse to form a community arising out of Christian love desiring to put Jesus at its center, is a religious and social reawakening which, if it succeeds, as we believe it will, will change the history of mankind.

Igino Giordani

(Excerpt taken from "The difficulties of the Christian today.")

A teacher:

"Our first educational experiment together"

I teach in a grade school and so even in my work I have the opportunity to live out my Christian commitment every day. The results, I think, have been very positive from an educational point of view. However, I felt recently that I should make others aware of what has been experienced within my classroom.

So I attempted to go a step further and to translate into scientific terms the positive reactions of the children. In our field this involved the translation into pedagogical, sociological and psychological (both developmental and behavioral) terms and into social development language, which is the evaluation of the extent to which

a relationship does or does not exist.

It was not an easy task. I tried to break the constructive relationships already experienced with the children into twenty-eight attitudes or "behavioral patterns," and to link these twenty-eight points to some widely known basic elements of behavior. So I chose two documents which were the Italian Constitution and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Between the two of them I could be sure of finding some common ground for teachers and parents. In my heart, I was really aiming this project towards them, in the hope that they might become involved. I illustrated each "behavior pattern" with articles from these documents. The outline of the program emerged from this. Its theme was socialization.

At the beginning of the year, at the teachers' general meeting, I had already contacted some other colleagues and we planned the program together. The teacher training college accepted it and so we could start the experiment. In order to give the work the appearance of a genuine "sociological research program," we also took into account the converse of the twenty-eight patterns. For example, the first three themes were: "Listen to whoever is speaking to you; listen attentively to whoever is speaking to you; don't laugh at other peoples' mistakes." Besides suggesting these themes to the children (we spent two weeks on each one), we tried to measure the level of error in terms of opposite behavior by indicating how many pupils in each class made these errors and also their frequency.



At Curitiba, a new house, built in wood, goes up for a family of the "favelas." In the widespread belts of misery stretching across many Brazilian cities, members of the Movement have been working to implement a complex, detailed program for the long-range insertion of these people into society. The construction of clinics, churches and schools, with programs ranging from basic education to professional skills training, are underway. The program focuses not only on resolving immediate problems, but on giving to the disadvantaged a new awareness of their dignity as human beings.

In the end there emerged a chart, of mathematical precision, which first and foremost amazed us teachers. In fact, by listing, as we found ourselves doing, the most frequent errors, our primary object was being reinforced: the reduction and elimination of such errors by appropriate educational methods. It was with joy that I noticed, my colleagues coming round bit by bit, and finally actively participating in the project.

I have been teaching in this school for fifteen years and never before had common ground been found for any project which might be adopted by the staff as a whole, let alone with parental participation. This time however, when we decided to seek the approval of the parents and proposed this project of socialization to them in a meeting, all of them were in agreement for it and even asked for photocopies of the pamphlet in which all the aims of the project were laid out, and they are now working with us towards these aims. During the year a neighbor-

ing education authority learned of the project and they too want to adopt the experiment.

The main result of this work has been bringing together of people and ideologies which are very different, and the advancement of values which give consideration to the humanity of the person; values which stress the importance of the "relationship" and which are basically evangelical, although expressed in scientific language. We are now making progress along this path.

Giulio Canova
Italy

A doctor:

"My relationships with my patients."

Many of us who work in medicine chose to become doctors because we felt called to alleviate suffering. Then, as time passes, with the day to day routine of work, tiredness, etc., other ambitions creep in: money, prestige, promotion. However, deep down, these

do not satisfy anyone. They leave a more or less conscious need to find a more gratifying motive for our work. I found one in a phrase of the Gospel: "Whatever you do to the least of these my brothers, you do to me." For me, this sentence shed light on the reality of the Mystical Body: All of humanity makes up this body which feels the effects of any contribution — however small — to its well-being and harmony.

From then on, my relationships with everyone, especially with my patients, changed. The change was above all within me. It didn't involve just exterior courtesy, but rather a search for the true well-being of every patient, in an honest way. This meant avoiding the simple acquiescence in order to get done quickly, or perhaps refusing to prescribe a medication or tests when they weren't really necessary.

Being sincere in this way meant recognizing at times that I was not always able to make exact diagnoses and find the correct treatments. This effort cost me a lot, not so much with my patients, as with my colleagues. I had to exercise real humility in my relationships with them.

Piera Reviglio, Italy

WORD OF LIFE

**"For the weak
I made myself weak.
I made myself
all things to all men
in order to save some
at any cost"
(1Cor.9:22).**

The word makes us live.

The word makes us free.

*The word
guarantees happiness.*

The word converts.

The word purifies us.

*The word draws us to our
specific vocations.*

*The word brings forth the
hatred of the world and the
sanctity of the disciple.*

*The word makes us see
the truth.*

The word brings comfort.

The word gives us joy.

The word produces works.

The word gives wisdom.

*The word preserves us
from human concerns.*

The word obtains everything.

*The word brings about
union with God.*

*The word gives us hope
of eternal life.*

The word makes us one.

*The word changes one's
mentality.*

*The word makes each soul
a heaven.*

"For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost."

In carrying out his extraordinary mission, the Apostle Paul conducted his life in a particular way: he strove to become all things to all people. In fact, he tried to understand everyone, enter into the mentality of each person: to be a Jew with the Jews, and with the non-Jews — those without a law revealed by God — to be as one without the law.

Paul followed the Jewish customs whenever this served to remove barriers or to reconcile souls; but when he worked in the Greco-Roman world, he adopted the culture and way of life of that world. He wrote:

"For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost."

"But," you might ask, "who were the 'weak'?"

They were Christians who, because of their fragile conscience and limited knowledge, were easily scandalized. For example, there was the question of whether or not Christians could eat the meat of animals sacrificed to idols.¹ Paul, knowing that there is only one God, understood that if other gods do not exist, there is no problem in eating meat sacrificed to these gods. But the "weak," accustomed as they were to reasoning in a certain way and lacking instruction, could have come to the opposite conclusion and been confused. And so Paul put himself in the situation of these Christians, and being sensitive to their weak understanding, he decided that in

order to avoid troubling their consciences, it would be advisable not to eat such meat.

"For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost."

But what prompted Paul to act in this way?

He saw before him the unlimited horizon of freedom from sin, from death, from the law, from the reign, of Satan, from the barriers imposed by nationality, class and sex, from every form of domination by others, from the taboos of food and customs, and so on.

Paul himself lived this freedom, and with the Gospel he offered it to the communities he founded.

And yet in the liberating reality of Christianity that he announced, Paul recognized the need — or rather, the imperative — to become the slave of someone: of his brothers and sisters, of each neighbor.

He understood this essential duty from the example of Christ, who let himself be crucified in order to reach every person whatever his or her situation, in order to become the servant of everyone.

By becoming man, God drew close to every human being, but on the cross, he proved his solidarity with each of us sinners, with our weaknesses, our sufferings, our anguish, our ignorance, our questions, our burdens, our moments of feeling abandoned.

Paul, too, wanted to live this way, and he declared:

"For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost."

How, then, can we too live this new Word of Life?

You know that the purpose of your life and of each new day is to reach God — and not alone, but with your brothers and sisters. In fact, you also, as a Christian, have received a call from God similar to the one received by Paul. Like the Apostle, you too must "save" someone, must "save some at any cost."

The way? "Make yourself one" with your neighbor. You have

¹) It was common practice to sell this meat in the marketplace.

some neighbors who are young and others who are grown-up; some who are ignorant, and others who are well-educated. There are those who are next to you all day long, and those you meet on the street; those with whom you speak on the phone, and those for whom you work. They may be rich or poor, men or women, fellow citizens or foreigners.

Love them all.

But this time, prefer the weakest. Make yourself weak with those who are weak in order to save them. Reach out to those who are weak in faith, indifferent or far from God, to those who profess to be atheists or who belittle religion.

If you make yourself one with them, even in their "weaknesses," you will find that Paul's apostolic method always works: you will conquer them!

Do you have a spouse who does not like the Church at all, and who enjoys spending hours watching TV? Keep him or her company whenever you can, as much as you can, taking a lively interest in what he or she likes to watch most.

Do you have a son who has made sports the center of his life, so much so that he is not interested in anything else, and has even forgotten how to pray? Become a more avid sports fan than he is himself.

Do you have friends who love to travel, to read, to study and who have thrown to the wind all religious principles? Try to understand them by understanding their preferences and their needs and if you can, help them to find what they are seeking.

Make yourself one — with everyone, in everything, as much as you can, except in sin. In the case of anything sinful, dissociate yourself.

You will see that making yourself one with your neighbors is not time lost; it is all time gained.

One day, in the not-too-distant future, they will want to know what interests you. And then, gratefully, they will discover, adore and love that God who has been the impetus for your Christian behavior.

CHIARA LUBICH

EXPERIENCES

OUT OF LOVE

One of the first projects my husband and I wanted to undertake when we moved into our own home was to change the wallpaper in the kitchen. Lack of funds and more pressing needs took priority in our home for four and a half years until this October when we saw wallpaper on sale. We decided to meet at the store the next afternoon after work. I gathered our two small children and off to the store we went to select the new paper.

After looking for quite a long period of time with many interruptions by two hungry, bored, "antcy" children, we found many papers we liked individually, but nothing mutually acceptable. We were both tired and hungry ourselves, more than a little exhausted at handling the children while trying to discuss and reach a decision, and irritated at our lack of success. We decided to try again later at a better time.

A few days later, circumstances found me with neither of the children so I decided to stop by the store alone to see if I could find some possible choices of wallpaper. In a short time, I found five that met all the requirements for color, matching the surrounding rooms, being washable and practical in the kitchen area, etc. I recorded the book names and page numbers, feeling happy and confident that at least one of the five would be acceptable to my husband.

The last day of the sale, we returned together to the store. I showed him all five of my choices

The following
are experiences that
some of our readers
shared with us
in living the
Gospel.

of which he liked none! I was flabbergasted! None!

I stood idly looking through the numerous books, thinking many things. Who, after all, had the better training and taste in interior decorating? All my Home Economics and years of experience in dealing with matching fabrics and colors must count for something! Besides, even though he was very helpful in the kitchen, I spent, by far, the greater amount of time there. Wasn't it only fair I decorate my domain with my preference? All of these things and others I tossed about in my mind and I remembered that the word of life was, "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." I felt I needed to try to love my husband more than my own preference for wallpaper. I knew that what would remain would be my love for Him, long after even this new wallpaper had faded. So with a new heart, I asked my husband what he had found that he liked the most, if there was one he would choose above all the others. There was and he showed it to me. I looked at it and my stomach got a knot in it. At once, in a second, many ideas flashed in my head. In my opinion, it was a little too loud, too many colors, the design too big for the kitchen and, not considering all of that, it was identical to the paper of our neighbors across the street. We live in a modest tract home. Half the homes for miles around this area are identical to ours. Was it really necessary to make them identical inside as well as outside? I thought not!

But I also thought that I needed to love Jesus in my husband. If this were Christ, would I fuss so much

for my own way? Was I ready, in that moment, to give up my life for my husband? If so, what difference was a little thing like wallpaper. I decided to love Jesus in my spouse, and humble myself. I smiled a big smile and told him his choice would be fine, really nice, and that we should go ahead and buy it right away. I felt a wave of peace come over my being at giving up my way and at doing it joyfully! We bought the rolls, and took them home and put them under the bed, promising each other to do this project soon.

'Soon' came in mid-December. With all of the many extra activities involved with both our children, both of our work, and our preparation for celebrating Christmas on our minds, we sat down to decide what to do with his vacation time while his company closed down from Christmas to New Year. For once, no family was going to be visiting us and it seemed to me the perfect opportunity to spend some time, just the four of us, camping or going to the ocean or traveling about and being together away from normal routines. To me, vacation meant literally "to vacate" and I was ready to go. My husband had only one desire: to wallpaper. My heart sank. I thought I'd made the sacrifice with the wallpaper, but I could see now, again, I was being given the opportunity to love. With much love, I agreed to do this project as much as was reasonable. I felt that we really needed to love our children, too, and create a balance between doing the project and spending some meaningful time with them. He understood. So by first loving my husband and agreeing to do what he wished, he was amenable to spending time also with the children. I knew his natural tendency to start a project and work day and night until its completion, so out of love for our children, I asked to set a little schedule of each day. We agreed to one morning of going to a museum, the afternoon for working; one morning to do the project, an afternoon at the beach, and so forth. It was a good balance.

So Christmas was over and time to begin; the actual doing of this gave me many opportunities to

FOUR MARIAPOLIS

WILL BE HELD IN NORTH AMERICA NEXT SUMMER!
YOU ARE INVITED!

SOUTHWEST: June 27, after supper — July 3, after breakfast
New Mexico Highlands University
Las Vegas, New Mexico

MIDWEST: July 11, after supper — July 17, after breakfast
Whitewater University
Whitewater, Wisconsin

NORTHWEST: July 18, after supper — July 24, after breakfast
Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington

EAST COAST: August 8, after supper — August 14, after breakfast
Alfred University
Alfred, New York

love Jesus in my husband and try to build our unity. One night, after putting our children in bed, we were busily working away when a friend dropped by after a meeting to pick up a magazine. For me, this person, too, was Jesus to be loved. I stopped working and gave her a cool drink and sat down with her. My husband quite firmly said just because there was company, there was no reason for everybody to take a break. I understood why he was always complimented for finishing his projects so rapidly at work. My desire was to say something to that effect. What a slave driver! But, instead, I humbled myself in front of my friend, loved this busy husband and went back to the wallpapering. My friend understood I needed to make unity first with my husband and we talked and laughed and drew him into the conversation.

At one point, we were putting up a piece that went from ceiling to floor behind the stove. Because nothing is truly square in the kitchen, a gap developed right behind the stove. It was a tiny crack just at the height where it was hidden, growing to an inch and a half at the floor. My friend laughed and said, "Good thing the stove was there!" I agreed and laughed too! My poor husband who in his work measures things to the 10,000th of an inch was appalled. Obviously, we had to redo this! So again, I gave up my idea and made unity

to him, loving him, and smiling and winking to my friend as she left.

Finally, the wallpaper was hung. I stood looking at it and had several thoughts. Although it was by no means ugly, it was still not my first choice; but how much more beautiful it had become because of the love with which it was hung. I thought how I was really understanding one thing I had heard so often, that there is no unity without the love of Jesus Crucified and Forsaken. That my loving Him had changed this whole experience so much. The children were happy with their vacation time. My husband said it was the best project we had done together. I wanted to be truly Christian, to follow Jesus, to bring him to the world. I had been waiting for a big thing, a big event or an earth-shattering experience that would be a big turning point in my life, that would make everything different. Something that would change everything from that moment on and make me changed — a true Christian — like Paul's experience of conversion. I realized standing there that all it was were the little things, like the wallpaper, that made all the difference. My husband came through to the kitchen and said with enthusiasm, "Doesn't it look nice? Such an improvement!" And with equal enthusiasm I agreed, "Yes, it looks very nice!" Many, many times since then I've looked at that wallpaper, smiled and been given the strength to love again and again. M.K.

(continued from page 13)

world the statute of the Focolare Movement, we said, "Should we also write one for the Anglican Focolare Movement?" I asked the Cardinal for his opinion. And I also mentioned this to Dr. Runcie Now, when we go back to Rome, we will review all this and then I'll tell you what we decide. But what I wanted to assure you is this. This gift of the spirituality that God has sent, as you have seen, is for all the churches; it is not just for the Catholic Church. It also helps the other churches. So if the light that has come down from God penetrates into all the churches, also the body which incarnates that light exists in all the churches. The statute which would be like an identity card saying, "This is the Work of Mary," will always be one, perhaps with special sections for the different churches. So don't be afraid of the statute, if it is born. We'll make it very light, in such a way that the Holy Spirit can rub it out.

There is also another thing. It is necessary for each of us, whether Anglicans, Orthodox or Lutherans, to remain well united to the source to the spring, because that is where you drink water, at the center of the Work of Mary. I know that this is the desire that you all have.

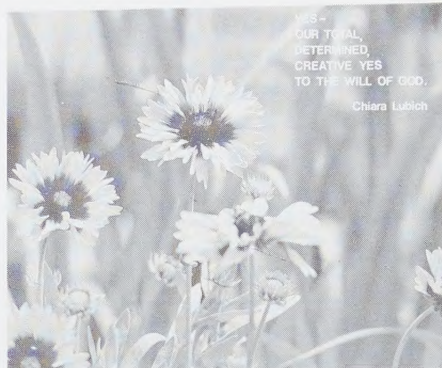
We have experienced the deep sense of unity which exists among the focolarini and we ardently wish to share it. We are Anglican clergy wives with responsibility in the family, commitments in the parish, and often a job to help our husband's stipend. We often live a long way from a focolare center. How can we enter into this life which calls us so strongly and gives us no peace unless we live it?

Chiara: This is the question of two Anglicans who wish to be volunteers. To answer this question I would say, you two should keep Jesus in your midst. Establish the presence of Jesus in your midst between the two of you, and always maintain it. This will be a light for everything else.

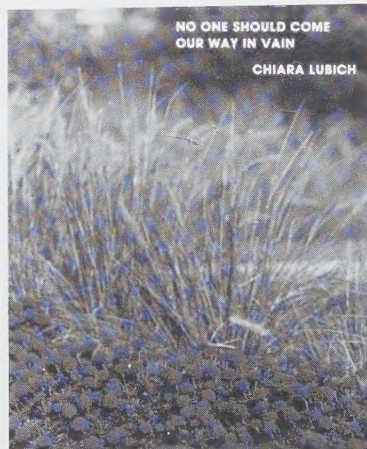
Reprinted from New City Supplement, London.

Focolare posters

A variety of posters, both color and black and white, are available at all the Focolare Centers. The latest two are in color (15"x18"). All of the posters can be ordered by mail from: Focolare Movement, P.O. Box 496, New York, NY 10021.



FMPc14



FMPc13

Price: \$2.00 per poster

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GEN ORANGE



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The Gen Orange is one of the singing groups of the Gen Movement, the youth of the worldwide Focolare Movement founded by Chiara Lubich in Trent, Italy in 1944. The aim of the Focolare Movement is to bring about unity in order to give its contribution toward the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer to his Father, "May they all be one."

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What is the Focolare Movement?

THE BEGINNINGS

The Focolare Movement began in 1943, in Italy. Chiara Lubich, with a small group of girls, realized in the midst of the total destruction of World War II, that God is the only one worth living for. Hence they began to place the Gospel in the center of their lives. The testament of Jesus became their Ideal: "That all may be one . . . that the world may know that you have sent me, and that you have loved them as you have loved me . . ." (Jn.17:23). The life lived by these first girls, the spiritual way they spontaneously followed, gave rise to a form of spirituality proper to the Focolare Movement. It represents a powerful means of introducing the Gospel into modern life.

WHO ARE THE FOCOLARINI

The name "Focolarini" takes its origin from the Italian word "fire" and suggests the idea of "carriers of fire."

Single men and women live in separate communities called Focolare Centers. Their principal aim is to achieve unity among themselves through mutual charity practiced twenty-four hours a day. They follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They work as other lay men and women in regular jobs and professions.

Some married persons, even though continuing to live in their families, participate fully in the life of either the men's or women's Focolare Centers in their common effort to achieve this same unity. They are called "Married Focolarini."

THE VOLUNTEERS

The Volunteers, who are also called the "Volunteers of God," would like to transform all human realities according to the Gospel spirit. For this reason they remain in their jobs and in their professions in order to vivify them with this spirit.

Their aim is to help form a society made of men and women who are made "new" by the Gospel message and who can then bring new life to all fields of human activity (education, business, etc.). This results in new social relationships which, in turn, lead to the realization of new structures of society.

THE LARGEST MEMBERSHIP

The largest membership of the Movement is made up of men, women, and young people of all social conditions who are free of any formal ties with it. Their bond of unity stems from their free and willing acceptance of its spirit. They keep in touch with the Movement and with one another through large or small gatherings, publications, correspondence, and personal contact.

People with other commitments, even those bound to religious institutions, can form part of the Movement too because the Movement exists wherever its spirit is lived. People of non-Christian religions are also counted among the Movement's friends. Also those who owe no allegiance to any faith are often attracted by one or another of the Movement's aspects.

THE NEW GENERATION

The new generations of the Focolare Movement form another Movement or, better, three movements: the Gen 2, the Gen 3 and the Gen 4 Movements, divided according to their various age groups. "Gen" stands for new generation.

Thousands of young people all over the world have been attracted by the spirituality of unity. Their number continues to grow.

At the core of this large group of youth, are Gen who have committed themselves to living the Gospel message of love. The Gen use all possible means to share with other youth the conviction they have that the Gospel is the answer to every question and the motive for everything they do.

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In this book Chiara Lubich explores the many facets of doing God's will, which is one of the central points in the life of the Focolare Movement she founded. Her central thesis is: God is love, and there can be no better way of loving him in return than by doing what he asks of us.

First she puts this fundamental intuition to the test of Scripture. She then moves on to the experiences of some of the great saints, and draws upon the teachings of the Church Fathers, the Second Vatican Council, and the recent popes.

This book is stimulating and practical. It shows that doing God's will involves much more than mere passivity or resignation. Moreover, throughout the book, Chiara Lubich points out that doing God's will is the way to true freedom and to our total fulfillment as human beings.

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Is it possible to begin a new life at fifty, to break out of the familiar routine and embark upon a new and risky course? Can convictions built up over a lifetime be suddenly overturned?

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